

**South Precinct Email Community Newsletter**  
**May 20, 2008**



Dear Community Friends:

**Warm Weather Security Tips**

It's that time of year that we review home security tips for the warm weather months. We do this on a continuing basis for a few reasons:

- 1) A large number of burglaries and thefts occur year-round via opened and/or unlocked doors and windows. That number dramatically increases during warm weather months because windows are left open for ventilation, even when the home is unoccupied.
- 2) Garages and storage sheds are often left opened and unattended while we're working in our yards.
- 3) Personal belongings are often left unattended while at a recreational venue or in vehicles.

We want to reiterate some safety tips to help reduce incidents of burglary and theft.

**Close And Lock Windows; Limit How Far They Can Be Opened**

When you are away from home, close and lock your windows. If you want to leave windows open enough for ventilation, use a dowel for sliding glass windows cut to a length that prevents the window from being opened more than four inches. For double hung windows, consider sash pins. Some windows have stops on the inside track, which prevent them from being opened too far.

**Lock Your Doors**

Anytime you leave your home, even if it for a very short amount of time, lock your doors. If you have deadbolt locks, please lock them.

- As always, we advise that you install 3"-4" screws on the strike plates of your exterior doors. These secure the plates to the jamb and the jamb to the framing of the door. This essentially makes the bolt from the lock going into the jamb "extend" in to the frame, making a properly locked door more secure.

**Working In The Yard**

When working in the yard in the back of the home, do not leave your front door open and/or unlocked. If you have a garage or storage unit that is out of your line of sight, close those doors as well. Be mindful of what are you showing in plain view to anyone who may be walking or driving by.

**Do Not Leave Personal Belongings Unattended**

Whether they are in a shopping cart or on a picnic blanket, always maintain positive control over your belongings. Never leave personal belongings unattended in your vehicle. Seattle has a high rate of theft of personal property from vehicles, particularly at public parks.

**Bicycles**

I recently toured our Evidence Unit. One thing that struck me was the number of bicycles that we have warehoused. This photo shows just one row of unclaimed bicycles that were found or recovered that we have no way of getting back to the owner. There are another four rows of bicycles just like this one. (By the way, the small figure a couple of hundred feet in the background is yours truly.) This gives you an idea as just how many orphaned bicycles we have. Again, *we have no way of returning them to their rightful owners because their owners cannot be identified.*

If you own a bicycle, please mark down the make, model, model number and serial number. Keep this information on an inventory sheet. Keep the inventory sheet (which should also have information of you other valuable items) with your other important papers. Take a picture of the bike. Engrave the bike with your Driver's license or State ID card number. An engraver can be purchased from most hardware stores (Lowe's, Ace) for about \$20-\$25. And please, use a cable/chain and lock and lock up your bike.



What's going to happen to all the bikes? Some will be donated, but most will be auctioned. Property auctions are now set up on line and operate like an eBay system. Check out [www.propertyroom.com](http://www.propertyroom.com). After Propertyroom.com covers their costs, the funds from the auction go towards police pension funds.

Until next time, Take Care and Stay Safe! Mark Solomon, SPD South Precinct Crime Prevention